

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 INR-05 CIAE-00 SP-02 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2228

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 14580

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJECT: THE "DIRG" TODAY

REF: (A) ADDIS 14515; (B) ADDIS 14487

THIS MESSAGE TRANSMITS BITS AND PIECES OF INTELLIGENCE REACHING
EMBASSY OF SITUATION/VIEWS INSIDE THE "DIRG" AT PRESENT JUNCTURE.
ALL IDENTIFIED SOURCES MUST BE STRICTLY PROTECTED.

1. MULUGETA BEZABIEH, MINAG DIRGEN, TIGRE, MCGILL EDUCATED,
TOLD MISSION OFFICER DECEMBER 4 THAT CHAIRMAN "DIRG'S"
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL WHO IS FRIEND OF HIS HAD SAID TO HIM THAT
THERE IS NOW 15-MAN GROUP IN "DIRG" OF "ACTIVE ADVOCATES"
ETHIOPIAN TURN TO MARXISM. THESE FIFTEEN CHARACTERIZED AS
SEMI-EDUCATED "CHILDREN." THEY SAID TO SPEAK IN JARGON
THEORETICAL SOCIALISM. THEIR CURRENT INTEREST SEEMS FOCUSED
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ON THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM OF COMMUNIST CHINA, PARTICULARLY

COMMUNES. GROUP IN QUESTION DESCRIBED AS COHESIVE, ACTIVIST. GROUP HAS, FOR EXAMPLE, WALKED OUT OF DISCUSSIONS EN BLOC WHEN TREND OF DEBATE DID NOT CONFORM TO ITS WISHES. COMMENT: IT OF SOME INTEREST THAT MULUGETA EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER ANY US ACTION WHICH WOULD CREATE A VACUUM HERE LEST IT BE FILLED BY "WRONG" PEOPLE/INTERESTS. COLLATERAL REPORTING ON THIS "MARXIST ELEMENT" GOING FORWARD THROUGH SEPARATE CHANNEL.

2. WELL ESTABLISHED RELIABLE "DIRG" SOURCE HAS TOLD OFFICIAL AMERICAN DECEMBER 5 THAT "DIRG" IS STILL AT APPROXIMATELY 120 MEMBER STRENGTH. AMAN HAD TRIED TO REDUCE ITS SIZE "TO INCREASE HIS OWN POWER" AND HAD FAILED. AMAN'S LETTER TO DR. KISSINGER, WHICH FULL "DIRG" MEMBERSHIP HAD NOT SEEN OR AUTHORIZED BEFORE IT WAS DESPATCHED, HAD CONTRIBUTED TO HIS DOWNFALL. IT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED STRONG EVIDENCE THAT AMAN WAS CONDUCTING THE NATION'S BUSINESS BEHIND THE "DIRG'S" BACK AS HE SAW FIT. ACCORDING SAME SOURCE, "REAL RADICALS" IN "DIRG" NOT RPT NOT YET IN POWER BUT SITUATION TRENDING IN THEIR DIRECTION AND AN ATTEMPT BY THEM TO TAKE CHARGE COULD OCCUR SOON.

3. "DIRG" NCO (UNIDENTIFIED) TOLD KNOWLEDGEABLE, VISITING, WELL-INTRODUCED AMERICAN PROFESSOR WITH LONGSTANDING INTEREST IN ETHIOPIA DECEMBER 4 THAT MAJ. MENGHISTU'S PERSONAL POLITICAL VIEWS WERE UNIMPORTANT AT PRESENT. HE REFUSED TO ELABORATE. NCO ADDED THAT KEY PEOPLE IN "DIRG" ARE SIX (UNSPECIFIED) WELL-EDUCATED MAJORS, WHO CAN AND SOMETIMES DO ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF "ASSEMBLY." HE ALSO ASSERTED THAT "DIRG" CURRENTLY STILL SPLIT BETWEEN THOSE WHO WANTED TO RESOLVE ERITREAN PROBLEMS BY NEGOTIATIONS AND THOSE WHO WANTED "TO INTERVENE." "DIRG" HAS NO PROGRAM, SOURCE CONCLUDED, AND PREVIOUS FEW IDEAS AT THIS TIME.

4. BRITISH EMBOFF CONFIDED DECEMBER 6 HE HAD HAD OPPORTUNITY SPEAK WITH "DIRG'S" CAPT. SISAY HABTE. COMMENT: SISAY IS KNOWN TO EMBASSY AS AMHARA EX-CHAIRMAN "DIRG'S" MINISTERIAL LIAISON COMMITTEE; CHAIRMAN ITS POLITICAL SUBCOMMITTEE WHO WE BELIEVE MAY HAVE BEEN MADE VICE-PRESIDENT OF "DIRG'S" STERRING COMMITTEE, VICE MAJ. ATENAFU O/A NOVEMBER 20. SISAY TOLD BRIT THAT TROOPS BEING SENT TO ERITREA COULD CONTRIBUTE EITHER TO A POLITICAL OR TO A MILITARY SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM
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(CF ADDIS 14487 PARA 4). SISAY ALSO SPOKE STRONGLY AGAINST FOREIGN ADVISERS AND FOREIGN AID WHICH, HE CONVEYED, ETHIOPIA COULD DO WITHOUT.

5. AMCIT WIFE OF EXECUTED EX-MININFO TESFAYE BEGRE EGZY TOLD AMERICAN OFFICIAL SOURCE DECEMBER 5 THAT SHE HAD FORTUITOUSLY COME ACROSS MAJ. NADEW IN SUPERMARKET. SHE HAD LONG KNOWN NADEW. (WE BELIEVE THAT MAJ. NADEW ZAHARIAS IS PRODUCT OF

FOURTH DIVISION AND GROUND FORCES HQ CO. IN CHARGE OF "DIRG"
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN "DIRG"
FOR MININFO. WE HOLD HIM AN ERITREAN.) REPORTEDLY, NADEW
ASSERTED THAT HE VOTED AGAINST EXECUTIONS. HE IS SAID TO HAVE
GONE ON TO SAY THAT FACTIONALISM IN "DIRG" HAD REACHED POINT
WHERE SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN KILLED. HE PURPORTED TO BE
UNCONCERNED SINCE HE NOT MEMBER OF FACTIONS INVOLVED. "IF I
DIE IT WILL BE THE DOING OF THE CIA." COMMENT: ADDRESSEES WILL
NOTETHAT INFO COMES TO US THROUGH CHANNEL WHICH MUST BE
PRESUMED HOSTILE TO "DIRG" AND THAT COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO
NADEW, IF KNOWN, COULD HANG HIM. WE HAVE NO RPT NO CORROBORATION
OF ALLEGED KILLINGS BUT CONSIDER THEY ARE POSSIBLE.
WYMAN

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